

Tale *Feathers*

September
2007

Volume 74
Number 6

Inside

General
Membership
Program Info for
Sept. and Oct.

President's
Message

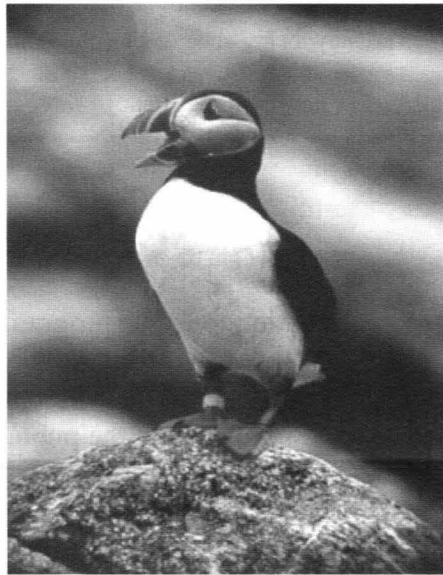
October
Bird walk and trip
info

....and MORE!!

Be sure to visit our
website to
get any new info
after publication.

SO YOU THINK PUFFINS ARE CUTE!!!

Friday, September 28th at 7 p.m.



Come join us at the Creve Coeur Government Center for an interesting evening, watch a *Chick Flick*, and learn more about puffins than you could ever imagine. St. Louis Audubon is inviting you to view puffins as you have never seen them before. A video taken by a remote camera placed into the dens of puffins to learn just how they live. The photographer, Daniel Breton, will be in St. Louis for the week-end and has agreed to not only show his video, but do his narration as well. The video was filmed on Seal Island about 20 miles off the Maine coast—not far from Hog Island where the Audubon Camp is

located. It took him four months on the island to film the puffins and his narration, as well as his video gives you the entire story.

He became interested in the puffins through his brother, Andre, who worked with Steve Kress on Project Puffin. With this and his interest in being a filmmaker, he decided to make this wildlife film. You will not be sorry for spending some time watching this video and listening to the fascinating story from the photographer as he spent 4 months with only the birds for company. (I can personally vouch for the video and narration being interesting)

From I-270 and Ladue, go east on Ladue, left at the light at New Ballas, go ¼ mile north to the Creve Coeur Government Center at 300 N. New Ballas. The Community Center is in the northwest corner of the lower level (closest to Olive and Ballas).

Questions, call Sharon Nickl at 636-391-8751.

St. Louis Audubon Society

Opportunities

and

Announcements

Mission Statement
of
The St. Louis
Audubon Society

Help our community
sustain biological
Diversity through
Nature.

Goals
To foster an aware-
ness and under-
standing
of birds and other
wildlife and their
habitats

To educate our com-
munity so people
can make
informed decisions
about the natural
world.

AUDUBON SOCIETY LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

The St. Louis Audubon Society announces a training class that is starting up for their speaker's bureau in their elementary education program. The speakers will be available free to schools and will cover topics ranging from birds to bats to plants.

"We are truly excited about this program. Environmental education is a big part of what Audubon is all about and what better place to start than at the elementary level," said local chapter president, Torrey Berger.

St. Louis Audubon Society, with 2,200 members, has a local focus on education, conservation and habitat restoration. It annually participates in Operation Clean Stream, conducts monthly general interest meetings, bird walks and song and shore bird habitat reclamation and restoration.

Applications are now being accepted for the January, 2008 class. Training will be a total of 10 hours.

Call Vicki Flier for applications or more information at 314-968-9166.

This is an invitation to a free program sponsored by the St Louis Rainforest Advocates on Saturday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m. at the Missouri Botanical Garden. All your members and the public are invited.

The speaker is Ingrid Porton, Primate Curator of the St Louis Zoo. Her slide talk is titled "Leaping Lemurs: the Role of Eco-agriculture in Maintaining Madagascar's Biodiversity."

Binoculars Wanted

The Saint Louis Audubon Society is partnering with Birders' Exchange, a nonprofit organization that helps get equipment for ornithological field research to scientists in Central and South America. We are looking for donations of new and used waterproof binoculars and scopes, tripods, backpacks, and field guides covering South America, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Donations can be given to any Saint Louis Audubon field trip leader, or can be dropped off at the Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center in Kirkwood, Missouri. If you have any questions about making a donation please call Eric Jeltz 314-210-3404.

Three Local SLAS Members Discover a Rare Bird in Florida in March, 2007 By Dave Pierce

On Sunday, March 18, 2007, on the second day of a ten day Florida birding trip, three "Senior Birding Buddies" (the birding group is now called the "Wagtails"), Dave Pierce, Dency Kahn, and Dave Faintich were driving toward our next birding destination in central Florida.

As we drove along a back road, I saw a sign for "Moon Lake Park." This place was not a part of the Great Florida Birding Trail, or as we were to find out later, not a place frequented by birders. It is a place for swimming, jet skiing and boating – a great recreational lake. We went there anyway to take a look, not expecting to find anything very interesting.

When we arrived at the park we drove up to the boat ramp, to the right of which is a man-made sand beach approximately 100 yards long. Several kids were playing on the beach. As we stopped, we immediately saw a bird fly onto the beach at the opposite end from the boat ramp. I suggested it might be a "peep" of some kind.

At that moment, a boater pulled up behind our car and gestured for me to move the car to the parking lot (about 25 yards behind the beach) so he could put in his boat. So I drove the car to the parking lot and returned to the beach with a spotting scope. Within a minute or two of watching this bird walk away from us, it turned around and started to walk toward us. As soon as Dave Faintich saw its huge black bib, he shouted to Dency "WAGTAIL". While on a European cruise with his wife last year, he saw a White Wagtail at the Madrid, Spain airport walking along the tarmac – so he was familiar with the Wagtail's features. Dency confirmed the sighting (she had seen a Wagtail in Japan years before). I had never seen a White Wagtail in my life.

We were positively able to identify this bird as a White Wagtail. For about twenty minutes we observed the bird, and Dave Faintich took a number of photos and videos. At various times the bird walked up and down the beach near the water and came

very close to us (within 20 feet or so), periodically walking toward and away from the water. It didn't seem to fear humans. As we were watching the bird, kids would come to the beach, and we shooed them away, telling them we were observing a rare bird and they needed to stay back.

We then decided that we should notify Florida birders (we knew the bird was rare, but at the time didn't know that this was the **FIRST SIGHTING EVER OF A WAGTAIL IN FLORIDA – AND ALSO FLORIDA'S 500TH BIRD!!!**

After trying several names from the Florida birding listserve, we finally got in touch with Murray Gardler, who met us at a local Perkins Pancake House, looked at the photos and confirmed the sighting. Murray immediately called the Florida birding hotline, followed us back to Moon Lake Park and within 30 minutes about 15-20 other birders showed up. Unfortunately, the Wagtail was gone and all the birders got to see were the photos and a video of the bird. Fortunately for them, the Wagtail showed up again at Moon Lake Park on March 19th and again on March 22nd so many other birders got to see it. We needed this verification so the local folks wouldn't think we were "nuts".

We met lots of Florida birders such as Murray Gardler, Al and Bev Hansen, Dave Freeland, Ken Tracey, Rick Greenspun, and Larry Manfredi and we thank them all for their hospitality during this great experience. We made some wonderful new birding friends!!! Rick Greenspun recently traveled through St Louis and we were able to show him several Eurasian Tree Sparrows for his life list.

On this Florida trip I was lucky to see 14 new lifers, mainly in the Miami and Homestead areas. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think we would find a White Wagtail! Many times birding can be uneventful, or even disappointing- but sometimes you get lucky. Its times like this that makes birding so rewarding.



October Birding Trips

By Pat Lueders

Saturday, October 13th, 8:00am—Two Rivers & RMBS

Mike Thelen will be leading an all day trip to this area north of St. Louis along the Great River Road. We will meet at the Gilbert Lake parking lot, just north of the entrance to the Brussels Ferry. Bring your lunch to eat at the headquarters building of Two Rivers National Wildlife Area. Many shorebirds and migrating land birds can be found in this area at this time of the year. Weather and time permitting, the group will also bird RMBS.

Directions: Two Rivers NWR: Take Route 100 north from Alton, IL, through Grafton, IL. Meet in Gilbert Lake parking lot just north of Brussels Ferry.

Wednesday, October 24th, 8:00am—Busch Conservation Area

This is our first Wednesday trip of the new season. We will meet in the parking lot of Hampton Lake, the first left turn after you enter Busch. Bring your lunch if you want to stay through the early afternoon. We will bird Busch and some of the surrounding areas. We will hope to see migrating land birds, shorebirds, and ducks.

Directions: Take Hwy 94 south from U.S. Hwy 40 (I-64). About 1 mile down road, turn right on Hwy D. Go about 1.5 miles to entrance on right.

Turn left at "T" to Hampton Lake. Meet in parking lot.

Correction on your yellow Fall 2007-Spring 2008 calendar: The trip listed as 10/14 is incorrect—the trip is scheduled for 10/13. See information above.

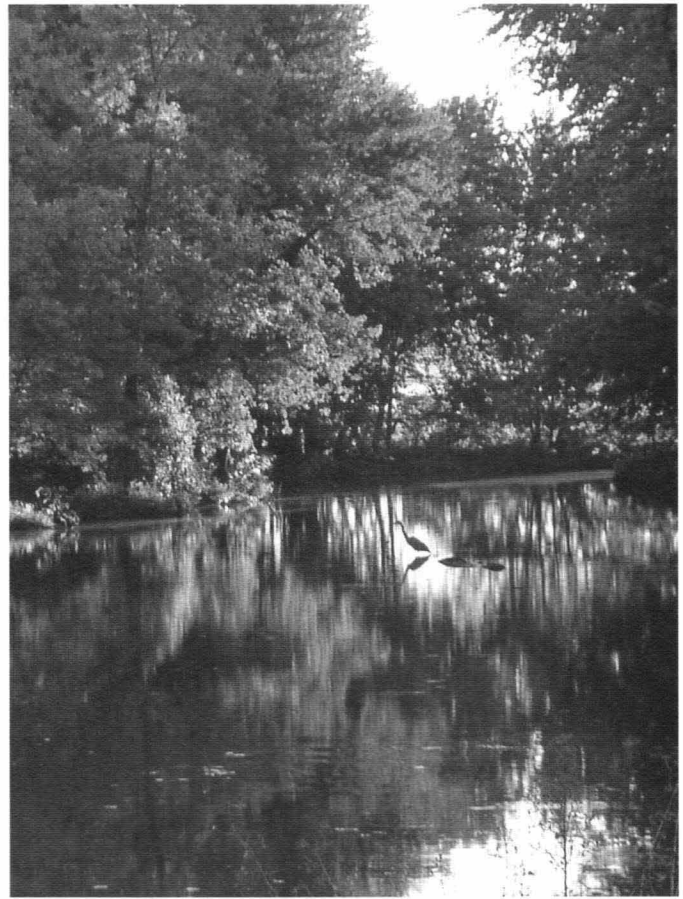


Photo Submitted by Pat Lueders.

Top Ten Ways to help the Environment.

Last month I wrote about my thoughts on how we can help the environment. Next month I would like to include hints from you, our members. So to recap my list from last month I have at the top:

1. Buy Made in the USA, mainly because of our EPA laws.
2. Buy products packaged in recyclable material to save our landfills.
3. Pass on your love of the environment to others.

Okay, I didn't make ten so now I am enlisting you to e-mail me with YOUR 3 or 5 or 10 ways we can all help. Yesterday, an atmospheric scientist in Denver, Colorado announced that this year, 2007, was the smallest arctic ice sheet on record. And we have another month of heat! We can't start changing our lifestyles soon enough.

E-mail Vicki Flier at rrvcc@aol.com with your list of lifestyle changes.

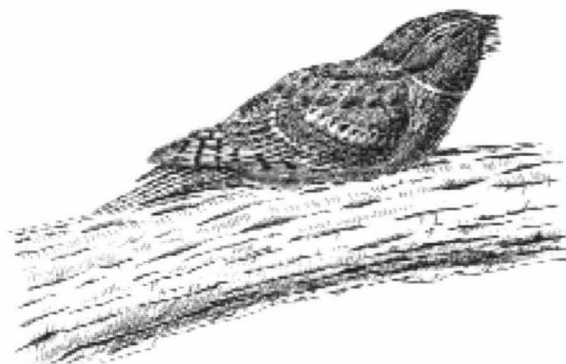
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Torrey Berger

Welcome to Our New Members! Many of you in St. Charles County and in Illinois may be wondering how or why you are receiving this news letter. You may not be aware that if you live within St. Louis Audubon's "area", when you join National Audubon you automatically become a member of the St. Louis Chapter. For reasons unknown, the zip code list for our area had not been updated for years. Thanks to our late friend and mentor, Jim Holsen, who researched the subject and pointed out the deficiencies. The up-shot is that National Audubon has now added many new zip codes in St. Charles and out-lying St. Louis County, as well as St. Clair and Madison Counties in Illinois. We hope you will enjoy getting local news and schedules.

Helping Missouri Birds Vacation in Central/South America. Most of the migrant breeding bird species in Missouri spend more than half of each year in Central or South America and particularly in Nicaragua, Honduras, Belize and parts of Mexico. Consequently, in providing effective conservation efforts on their behalf, we can not center our efforts totally on Missouri; while such efforts are neglected in their wintering grounds. For this reason, the Missouri Department of Conservation has and is involved in habitat preservation and restoration and field-study activities in these countries. The SLAS board had determined that we should join in this effort. The establishment of the Cathlee Creley Conservation and Education Fund will greatly assist in these efforts. We are currently looking at the possibilities of supporting efforts at preserves in Mexico, Nicaragua or Belize, as well as providing financial assistance for graduate students doing research in these areas. We are also investigating the possibility of joining efforts with other Missouri Chapters. We will be advising you as to our specific efforts in the near future as well as giving you the opportunity to directly participate in these efforts for Missouri's birds in foreign lands.

Has "IT" reach Audubon? With ever increasing postal costs and our increasing membership, we are forced to look at ways to reduce costs if we are not to slide to far into the red, financially. Accordingly, we are looking into ways we might supply Tailfeathers and the information contained therein by email. You can expect to hear from us shortly as to your options in that regard. Be assured that we are committed to continued communication with all members, whether or not connected to the internet.



Common Birds in Decline

By Karen Meyer, VP Conservation

This summer the National Audubon Society reported an analysis that reports that populations of some of our most familiar birds have declined as much as 80 percent over the last 40 years.

It was over 40 years ago when I heard my first Northern Bobwhite and Whip-poor-will. Their vocalizations sounded so distinct and unusual. Perhaps they seemed so special because they weren't to be found in our urban areas. And it amused me that their names and their calls sounded just alike. Dad was a whistler, and he could mimic these and other bird-calls and songs quite well. It impressed me how he persuaded the male Bobwhite to answer when he whistled the female's call. And we also looked forward to the Whip-poor-will's spring serenades on visits to Lake of the Ozarks. Those early experiences led me down the birder's path, where I find myself yet today.

But will we continue to find these familiar birds? Unfortunately these two species are on the list of the common birds in decline. This list includes Eastern Meadowlarks, Evening Grosbeaks, Snow Bunting, Northern Pintail, Greater Scaup, Field Sparrow, and more. The dramatic reductions in numbers are partially the result of loss of healthy forests, wetlands, grasslands, and other important habitats. Though these common birds in decline are not in immediate danger of extinction, some are very close to the threshold of "common" status.

Things we can do:

Join the Christmas Bird Count, which can help ornithologists gather scientific data, <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/index.html>. Or get involved in the Great Backyard Bird Count in February, <http://www.audubon.org/bird/pdf/GreatBackyardBirdCount.pdf>, or the North American Migratory Count the second Saturday of May.

Be aware that exotic plant and animal species, including domestic cats allowed outdoors, are threatening bird populations. Volunteer in October and November when your local parks and organizations announce days to help remove invasive plants.

Support legislation about farmlands (2007 Farm Bill), sustainable forests, and clean waterways.

Be supportive of IBA (Important Bird Areas) where improvements to habitat for grass and shrub-nesting birds are needed. <http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba>

Keep your feeders clean.

Support legislation to halt global warming. Visit <http://audubonaction.org>.

Feel good about yourself and what you can do, and do what you can to help. We rely on these familiar feathered creatures not only for the balance-of-nature duties they perform, but also because they renew and delight us. And we begin to understand more and more that they depend on *us*, too.

Forest Park Bird Walks for Beginners to Resume

St. Louis Audubon Society Board Members, Lynne Breakstone and Jim Wilson, will lead two hour workshop to introduce beginners to bird watching. This class is being held in Forest Park at the Dennis and Judith Jones Education and Visitor Center. There is no fee to participate. The workshop will be held on the first Saturday of each month. Please watch the SLAS website of a schedule or changes.

The workshop will take place indoors with a short walk outside, weather permitting. Please come dressed for one-hour of birding with only moderate walking.

Topics will include: Bird Identification, how to use field guides, helpful hints in using or choosing binoculars, and tips for your backyard feeding station.

Saturday, September 8, 2007

Saturday, October 6, 2007

Dennis & Judith Jones Visitor Center

5595 Grand Drive in Forest Park

Kindly RSVP to Anne Grossmann at (314) 367-7275, ext 14 or email to

agrossmann@forestparkforever.org. Class limited to 25 people.

The St. Louis Audubon Society
wishes extend a grateful
Thank-you to
Caroline Sant
for her gift to our
Chapter in memory of
Jim Holson.

Belize & Guatemala Adventure

Tuesday, October 16th

Preview of October Chapter General Membership Meeting

Thatched-roof cabanas, night-time truck safaris, tropical rain forests, towering Mayan ruins, scarlet macaws, keel-billed toucans, Montezuma oropendolas—all are part of a tropical birding adventure in Belize and Guatemala. Susan Eaton and Mike Grant will share stories and photos from their birding trip to Belize and Guatemala with the Massachusetts Audubon Society last February. Whether you're thinking about going there, have already been or like us haven't met a bird you didn't just LOVE—you'll surely enjoy their program!

The evening will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Powder Valley Nature Center. Please bring a friend as the program is free to all.

From the intersection of Interstates 44 & 270, take Watson Rd. to Geyer Rd. Turn north on Geyer for 200 yds. to Cragwold Rd.

Go west on Cragwold for 1 mi. to nature center entrance on right. Follow drive to parking lot.

Enter building through left entrance.

Questions, call Mitch Leachman at 314-739-5112.



Tale Feathers

Tale Feathers is published monthly by the St. Louis Audubon Society. Messenger Printing prints 2,400 copies of each newsletter on recycled paper using soy ink. Mary Dueren edits the newsletter. To contact the editor, call evenings to 314-576-1473 or email: mdueren@charter.net.

St. Louis Audubon Society 2007 - 2008

St. Louis Audubon Society
P.O. Box 220227
Kirkwood, MO 63122
Phone: 314-822-6595

Officers

President - Torrey Berger	314-579-9227
VP Education - Vicki Flier	314-968-9166
VP Conservation - Karen Meyer	314-469-8742
VP Finance - John Solodar	314-862-5294
Treasurer - David Rogles	636-936-0660
Secretary - Linda Zurfluh	314-821-4776

Board members

Lynne Breakstone	314-726-4772
David Bruns	314-968-2091
Erin Connett	314-494-1885
Tom Creley	314-842-7850
Cathy Devine	314-962-3460
Mary Dueren	314-576-1473
Ann Earley	314-799-3961
Anne Rankin Horton	636-256-3402
Eric Jeltres	314-353-4415
Susan Krupa	636-405-1230
Mitch Leachman	314-739-5112
Pat Lueders	314-961-6614
Sharon Nikl	636-391-8751
Joel Porath	636-527-0175
Mary Smidt	636-227-6127
Mike Thelen	314-862-6642
Linda Tossing	314-849-4260
Jim Wilson	314-534-9975

St. Louis Audubon Society

P.O. Box 220227

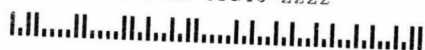
St. Louis, Mo. 63122

Ph: 314.822.6595

www.stlouisaudubon.org

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. LOUIS, MO.
PERMIT NO. 5128

ID:0000635753 Exp:11/07
MARY E. DUEREN
13276 WINDBROOKE LA
SAINT LOUIS MO 63146-2222



ST. LOUIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

St. Louis Chapter ONLY Membership Application

By using this Application, your membership dues will go directly to the St. Louis Audubon Society Chapter. Your membership dues will support local issues that are important to you, programs at our general meetings, and ***Tale Feathers***, our newsletter.

Chapter Only Dues are \$15.00 per year and cover all members living at the same address.

Please complete the form, enclose a check payable to SLAS, and mail to:
St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, Missouri 63122.

PLEASE PRINT

Circle One.

NEW

RENEWAL

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

E-mail (optional):

Note: Do Not Use This Form to Join or Renew Membership in the National Audubon Society. To join National and receive the National Audubon Magazine (as well as Tale Feathers), please contact www.audubon.org for an additional application.